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ABSTRACT

A research project examined the current needs of and potential services for visible minority students within Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST). The examination focused on three main questions: accuracy of the present definition of visible minorities, barriers experienced by visible minority students in six areas, and interventions or accommodations necessary to overcome these barriers. The primary research was undertaken by conducting focus groups with students of English as a second language and representatives from external groups and interviewing and surveying visible minority students. Findings resulted in these recommendations: determination of an appropriate name and definition for this population and revision of all related SIAST policies and documents to include them; active recruitment of equity students; development of a model for evaluating foreign credentials; evaluation of all entrance tests; development of a formal prior learning assessment process; development and delivery of a preparatory class, course in technical language development, and bias-free curriculum to increase retention; promotion of flexibility in program organization; development of academic support; promotion of diversity awareness; development of follow-up for minority students; mandatory staff development on diversity; and representation on the education equity committee for the external community. (Appendixes include 17 references, student questionnaires, and list of colleges/institutes surveyed.) (YLB)

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ED 368 907

Looking through Eyes of Compassion:

Visible Minorities in SIAST

Prepared for the SIAST Education Equity Committee

By

Grant L. Young

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

March 1994

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March, 1994

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Looking through Eyes of Compassion: Visible Minorities in SIAST

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
(Article 1, U. N. Declaration of Human Rights)

There is a difference between treating people equally as we do in civil liberties and treating people as equals as we do in human rights.
(Rosalie Abella)

Learn to look at other beings with the eyes of compassion.
(Thich Nhat Hanh)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This research project examined the current needs of and potential services for visible minority students within SIAST. This examination focused on three main questions, as outlined in the proposal to the enhancement fund:

1. Is our present definition of visible minorities accurate or does the definition require additional clarifying statements?

2. What barriers are experienced by visible minority students in each of these areas:

    - Recruitment
    - Admissions
    - Retention
    - Graduate Follow-up
    - Staff development
    - Organization of the education equity program.

3. What interventions or accommodations need to occur to overcome these barriers?

This research project, funded by the SIAST Education Equity Enhancement Fund, was designed to enhance existing support services and special measures for the visible minority students. Benefits of this project will extend not only to visible minority students, but also to the whole SIAST community.

Other stakeholder groups that will also benefit from having a consistent policy for the provision of services include: faculty, staff, management, education equity coordinators, other students, and external community groups.

1.2 Background

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) is "an institution for adult career education, responsive and committed to quality and freedom within a healthy organizational climate" (SIAST, 1994). SIAST is comprised of a central secretariat (in Saskatoon) and four institutes: Kelsey (Saskatoon), Palliser (Moose Jaw), Wascana (Regina), and Woodland (Prince Albert.

SIAST first created an education/employment equity policy in 1989 with three main target groups: women, aboriginal people, and people with disabilities. Each year SIAST publishes a monitoring report on the activities of the education equity program. This report is then submitted to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. The most recent report (SIAST, 1993) covers the academic year of July 1, 1992 to June 30, 1993, and reports on activities for the three designated groups as above. However, one of the issues identified in the report was to "complete the identification of services required for students of visible minorities and develop appropriate services" (p. 32).

This issue is in response, partially to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission's agreement to include visible minorities as a designated group for affirmative action in the province, in August, 1992. The official name and definition of visible minorities adopted by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission defines visible minorities, using the definition in the federal ***Employment Equity Act***, as "members of visible minorities means persons who are, because of their race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada", and with the supplementary definition of "persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are, because of their race or colour, in a visible minority in Canada are considered to be persons who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour" (as quoted in letter from Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, September 24, 1992).

There is a small but growing percentage of visible minorities in the Saskatchewan population. In 1986 census data, there was an overall percentage of 2.3% with Saskatoon having a percentage of 4.1%, and Regina at 4.4%. The 1991 census data was 2.6% overall, with Saskatoon at 4.7%, and Regina at 5.1% (figures from Statistics Canada).

Actual and potential students from visible minorities are now requesting accommodation to assist them in their programs. SIAST is now in the process of including visible minorities in its education equity program. SIAST needs to develop consistent policy guidelines and criteria for accommodation as it relates to visible minority students.

2.0 Methodology

This research project used a qualitative design intended to investigate and discover rather than to evaluate or to formulate particular generalizations or truths. (This research was conducted with and should be received with the attitude of "no blame, no shame" and the perspective of joint problem-solving.)

Primary Research

The primary research was undertaken by conducting focus groups, interviewing, and surveying with short open-ended questionnaires. One focus group was conducted with eight ESL (English as a Second Language) students at Woodland. Another focus group was conducted with representatives from external community groups (Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians, Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan - Saskatoon Chapter, and Saskatoon Multicuitural Council). Visible minority students at each of the other three institutes of SIAST were surveyed and interviewed. Eleven students were interviewed and five others replied to the questionnaire for a total number of sixteen direct responses. Short questionnaires and follow up interviews were conducted with other key stakeholders also at each of the four institutes: education equity coordinators/counsellors, placement officers, high school liaison personnel, human resource managers, SIAST professional development committees, and registrars. As well, 49 other colleges/institutes in Canada were surveyed and follow up discussions were initiated with representatives from some of the other colleges in Canada. Of these 49, 15 colleges responded to the questionnaire.

The sources of data used in the project are summarized on the table "Data Source Matrix: Education Equity Research Project" on the following page.

Secondary Research

Secondary research was conducted through an internal review of SIAST reports and documents and an external literature search.

DATA SOURCE MATRIX: EDUCATION EQUITY RESEARCH PROJECT Date: January 14, 1994

ITEM	Lit/ Docs	Other Colleges	SIAST Services	Educ. Equity	Equity Students
Definitions	x	x		x	x
Recruitment	x	x	HSL	x	x
Admissions	x	x	R	x	x
Retention	x	x		x	x
Follow up	x	x	P	x	
Staff Development	x	x	HR	x	
Organization of Ed. Equity	x	x		x	
Suggested Interventions	x	x	x	x	x

Legend: *HSL = High school liaison*
R = Registrars
P = Placement Officers
HR = Human resources/professional development

3.0 Definition of Visible Minorities

Is the SIAST present definition of visible minorities accurate or does the definition require additional clarifying statements?

3.1 Literature Review

External sources. The term "visible minority" is contained in the official language and literature of the federal and provincial governments (e.g. Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission). However, there is little use or acceptance of the term in non-official sources. Some other terms used or suggested include: "culturally diverse" (Locke and Parker, 1991, p. ix); "ethnically diverse" (Bowen & Jackson, 1992, p. 19); "racial/ethnocultural community" (ACCC, 1990, p. vi); "people of colour" (Das Gupta, 1993, p. 33); "racially visible people" (Willis, 1993); and, "multicultural population" (Advanced Education Council of British Columbia, 1992, p. 11).

"Naming is power, which is why the issue of naming is one of the most important in bias-free language" states Maggio (1991). Maggio (1991) then offers some principles to guide the process of naming:

> (a) self-definition: people decide what they want to be called;
> (b) insider/outsider rule: insiders may describe themselves in ways that the outsider may not; and,
> (c) people first rule: labels are disabling, so refer to the person first, and then to the distinguishing characteristic (e.g. not a diabetic but a person with diabetes).

Using the principles of self-definition and people first, how does the term "visible minority" stand up. First, it is an official label, created by government, not by the people themselves. Second, it does not acknowledge the person first, but rather labels that person disregarding his/her common humanity. The resulting label can impact negatively on the self-esteem of the person labelled.

Internal SIAST sources. SIAST documents now contain some reference or definition for the visible minorities designated group. This includes the application form, as well as the SIAST calendar for 1994-95. In the SIAST application form the section for education equity contains the category of visible minority, but no definition. The statement "The SIAST Education Equity Brochure provides a definition of 'visible minority'" is provided but is less useful (people may not have access to the brochure), and certainly less direct than a simple definition right in the admissions form itself. The SIAST education/employment equity policy itself has no reference as yet to visible minorities. Although, this policy is now under revision.

3.2 Results from Stakeholders

The community representatives (from the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians, Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon Chapter), and Saskatoon Multicultural Council) voiced strong opposition to the term "visible minorities". In its place, they suggested "racialized" Canadians. In its written rationale for this term, the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians identified three problems with the term "visible minority":

i. fails to address the myth that differences in physical features among people determine their beliefs, abilities and behaviour; it fails to identify and deal with the real problem - racism, or the belief in 'human races';
ii. does not incorporate the historical aspect of the problem of racism, without which we cannot understand and address its complexity and intensity;
iii. is based on a wrong assumption, that 'racial' discrimination is only based on physical features. . . ignoring other basis of discrimination (e.g. language, religion).

SIAST staff members were generally unsupportive of the term. Comments from various staff members include: "may be derogatory"; "negative connotation"; "meaningless, too vague"; "based on human rights commission"; "confusing"; "less than connotation"; "can be confused with aboriginals or physically disabled people".

Students had an expected range of responses to the term, as well. 8 of the 24 students had never heard it before or did not know what it meant. The other 16 students had heard it and had a variety of definitions, mostly dealing with physical characteristics. Most of these 16 also saw themselves as being in this group. Only one person spoke positively (i.e. happy) about the term as "it had some advantages". Most of the rest were either indifferent or did not think that there should be such a category. These students just wanted to be treated as Canadians like everybody else.

3.3 Other Colleges/Institutes

Fifteen (15) of the 49 colleges/institutes responded to a short questionnaire on how they dealt with visible minorities or education equity in general. These 15 colleges are identified (with an "R" for response) on the list of colleges/institutes surveyed in the appendices.

The responses from other colleges/institutes indicated that only 2 out of the 15 colleges (Holland College and the University College of the Caribou) did use the term visible minorities. Other colleges used different terms such as: visible racial minority (Ontario colleges); ethnocultural group (Red River College); culturally diverse learners (Grant MacEwan Community College);

college community (Alberta Vocational College - Calgary); cultural diversities (Loyalist College); racially visible (Cabot College); and people of colour (Nova Scotia Community College - informally).

3.4 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with the definition of visible minorities include:

1. **Name**: determine an appropriate name and definition for this designated group/population, from consultation with representatives of the racial groups involved (especially the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians).

2. **Documentation**: (a) revise all related SIAST policies, documents, and promotional literature to include the name and definitions of this designated group; and,
(b) provide the name and definition of the name right on the admissions form, with no reference to other documents.

4.0 Recruitment

What barriers are experienced by visible minority students in the area of recruitment?

What efforts are currently being made to recruit people who are in the visible minority category?

What efforts/interventions would be useful to better attract and recruit people in the visible minority category?

4.1 Literature Review

The following barriers that relate to recruitment and admission to post-secondary education are outlined in **Enhancing Diversity in Vocational Education** (Bowen & Jackson, 1992):

- the negative effects of racism, learned behaviours emanating from ignorance and poor understanding and appreciation.
- the negative consequences of racial myths and stereotypes.
- not knowing the programmatic needs of an ethnically diverse community and how to meet such needs.
- lacking knowledge of programs and/or assuming that programs are not of interest to individuals from diverse backgrounds.

- individuals from diverse backgrounds not feeling welcome to participate or that they will be rejected if they do. (p. 13)

The President's Task Force on Multicultural and Aboriginal Communities at Red River Community College (1993) identified a number of general barriers that may explain why students from minority groups do not enter and complete programs in higher education at the same rate as students from other segments of society. Some of these barriers relate to recruitment and admission into a program and include (but are not restricted to):

- problems with language
- inferior elementary and secondary school education
- inadequate academic advising and support services
- inadequate career counselling and counselling that diverts students into non-academic education
- racism/discriminatory attitudes on the part of students/staff. (p. 7-8)

4.2 Results from Stakeholders

Most of the students found information quite easy to obtain either directly from SIAST facilities or through calendars and 800 numbers.

A number of barriers or difficulties were identified by some students though, such as:

- rude or unsympathetic treatment by institute staff giving information (e.g. over the phone);
- feeling of disrespect;
- problems with funding agencies and SIAST not being coordinated;
- gaps in information such as some program or course descriptions being unclear;
- not knowing the rules.

Barriers identified by staff included:

- images and people used in advertising and recruitment tend to be from the dominant culture;
- lack of information about the new equity category.

Efforts that are currently being made to recruit people who are in the visible minority category include:

- education equity information included in presentations to high schools, ABE classes, done by SUTIL (Saskatchewan Universities and Technical Institutes Liaison) representatives;
- visible minority people are included in all existing recruitment strategies (spend-a-day programs);
- education equity program is described in calendar and in separate

brochure;
- provide information to media (e.g. local newspapers) and to local community groups.

Staff suggestions for efforts that would be useful to better attract and recruit people in the visible minority category include:

- increased attention to ESL and ABE programs;
- increased contact with local multicultural groups;
- give more information to the SUTIL representatives on what services or accommodations are available for visible minorities;
- make information packages easy to handle and pass on to others;
- include images from equity populations in video or slide presentations;
- give more information to high school counsellors on the education equity policy so they can pass this on to their students;
- provide more pre-registration counselling.

Students also had a number of suggestions "to promote the image of SIAST as a good place to go, like the university", such as:

- make sure that funding agencies have program information;
- work with community groups like the multicultural society or open door society;
- put calendars or brochures in schools, universities, public libraries, malls;
- include some information about full-time programs with the extension brochures, like a list of programs and phone numbers for information;
- use media more, such as cable television or radio;
- have people who can "explain the things a new student needs to know in their own language".

4.3 Other Colleges/Institutes

The President's Task Force at Red River Community College (1993) recommended several marketing strategies: promoting programs through the media and through community centres, public and high school libraries; career days; targeting specific groups; and, improving the links with specific communities. As well, a recommendation for improving direct recruitment included to maintain linkages with various ethnocultural communities and to ask people from those communities to help in recruitment.

Centennial College advertises in ethnic media and contacts associations.

The University College of the Caribou uses high school liaison visits, career fairs, campus tours, etc. for all students. Also this college has an annual

Counsellors conference in which high school counsellors come to the college for a day. This was also done for First Nations bands' people, but nothing specific is done for visible minorities.

4.4 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with recruitment include:

1. **Recruit:** actively recruit equity students using the suggestions gathered from both staff and from students.

2. **Materials:** examine and revise SIAST public relations materials (especially the calendar) in order to reflect a diversity (in all its forms) in our population base.

3. **Linkages:** (a) create stronger links with the external minority communities and involve people from those communities directly in recruiting efforts; and,
(b) create stronger links with funding agencies that deal with new immigrants, to increase the communication and coordination of activities.

5.0 Admissions

What barriers are experienced by visible minority students in the area of admissions?

How do registrars currently evaluate credentials from other countries as part of the admission process, and what changes may be needed?

What changes will be required to the present admissions standards and processes to support the inclusion of visible minorities as an equity target group?

What other accommodations or interventions need to occur to overcome barriers?

5.1 Results from Stakeholders

The information pamphlet **Equity & Anti-Racism Education** (Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians) describes two key institutional and systemic barriers in the education system:

- inadequate support to those whose first language is neither English nor French and a lack of sensitivity to cultural differences; and,
- students and professionals who completed their studies outside Canada experience inequity as there is no standardized method of assessing their qualifications/credentials.

These concerns were confirmed and reinforced by the community group representatives in the focus group discussion.

Language requirement. Community group representatives identified two problems with pre-admission language training: language training was at too low a level; and, language training was not linked to technical training.

Most students did not object to the language requirement as part of the admissions process. "If you do not have good English, you will have trouble understanding the books" was a common sentiment expressed. Suggestions about language related to retention issues and are dealt with in that section.

The evidence of proficiency for English varies from institute to institute and this was reflected in a difference of opinion between registrars regarding the validity of those requirements. It was indicated that the issue of language proficiency is not limited to visible minorities, but extended to other new immigrants, and even to some aboriginal people. Accommodation in the area of language offered to visible minorities should also be extended to these other populations as well.

Suggestions from the community groups to improve language preparation to meet requirements included:

- develop different levels of language training from simple (basic survival) to complex (occupation-related);
- develop preparation programs which combine language training with some technical courses.

Evaluation of credentials. Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment no longer provides this service to SIAST as a whole, although Palliser does still use it. Registrars at Kelsey and Wascana conduct evaluations, using a fairly subjective methodology and professional judgement. There is some informal national criteria available for reference. Woodland does not require evaluation of transcripts for admissions with an open entry admissions policy. As the volume is growing, it was suggested that SIAST could use a specialized person to conduct these assessments. One registrar also

suggested that a prior learning assessment would be valuable in this area.

Community group representatives saw this as one of the main issues to deal with as there were problems with how this is being conducted, such as: unclear interpretation of results, inconsistency, unfair assessment of credit. They suggested a set protocol for the process for all students. Part of the process could include "to work as a team" by setting up a local committee to help SIAST evaluate transcripts or to set up a "safety net" of direct contact with people in Saskatchewan from the country in question.

Some students reported difficulties getting into programs or getting credit for previous work, especially where transcripts were not available (e.g. refugees fleeing a country don't usually have time to get original transcripts). This resulted in having to spend time in upgrading or to take work over which means it takes longer to complete the program, at a much higher cost to the student and society.

Entrance tests. Difficulties with entrance tests experienced by students included:

- entrance tests (e.g. GED, TOEFL) were not very good as the tests dealt with subjects (e.g. American literature) that were not directly related to the program, so someone with a knowledge of science and math could do well in a science program, but not get a good score and not get in;
- TOEFL is too high, university level;
- confusion between GED and institute entrance test;
- not informed about preparation materials available;
- results of tests not being explained fully to students;
- give more information about the levels needed to pass the tests.

Student response to the question "would it be helpful to get tested in your English capability before going into the program?" was favourable with 9 of 16 students in favour, 2 students opposed, and 5 were indifferent.

Suggestions to improve entrance tests:

- make the tests more program specific;
- have a general test at the level of grade 12;
- accommodation made in the time allowed for writing the test.

Other accommodations. The registrars were not in support of using reserved seats for this target group for a number of reasons: "do not know how effective this measure has been in increasing participation of other groups"; "requires substantial additional administration"; "don't know whether or not it is under-represented in our student population"; and, "increasing negative reaction from the general public on restrictions being placed on access to

SIAST programs as the result of reduced capacities".

5.2 Other Colleges/Institutes

Across Canada, there is not much being done directly to assist students from visible minorities to be admitted into programs. Some colleges are beginning to take action, as the following examples illustrate:

- Algonquin College has developed a prior learning assessment model and has piloted the model in the health sciences area.

- Nova Scotia Community College has one seat assigned in each program for Afro-Canadians, and one for aboriginal Canadians.

- Cabot College and The University College of the Caribou have a first come, first served policy for all programs.

- Ontario colleges are now starting to collect data on equity target populations using a common application form with opportunity for people to self-identify.

- Red River College's task force called for examining practices and policies with regard to pre-admissions testing to make them more diagnostic rather than presenting an obstacle to the student.

- George Brown College policy calls for using unbiased assessment and testing procedures, and for providing a range of alternatives to help students enter programs. Procedures used to support this policy include: removing bias from existing entrance criteria and assessment procedures; establishing fair procedures to assess educational qualifications of any applicant who is unable to produce formal proof of completion of previous education; and, establishing special English courses for students having difficulty with a program because of language difficulty.

5.3 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with admissions include:

1. **English language requirement**: (a) evaluate the existing pre-admission language training at SIAST to determine its effectiveness in preparing students for further training; and,
   (b) evaluate the current satisfactory evidence of English proficiency to determine relevance and fairness.

2. **Credentials**: develop a SIAST-wide model for evaluating foreign credentials, in consultation with external community groups and other colleges and universities.

3. **Entrance tests**: (a) evaluate all entrance tests (including TOEFL and GED) to determine utility and relevance and to ensure that such tests are free from bias; and,
(b) investigate the feasibility of developing program-related entrance tests.

4. **Prior Learning Assessment**: develop a formal prior learning assessment process that can be used in determining qualifications for admission, as well as for granting credit within a program.

6.0 Retention

What barriers are experienced by visible minority students in the area of retention in the program?

What accommodations or interventions need to occur to overcome these barriers?

6.1 Literature Review

Barriers and difficulties experienced by "racialized" students have been identified by a number of writers: Bowen and Jackson (1992), Das Gupta (1993), MacDonald (1992), Hynes (1987). Bowen and Jackson (1992) identified some general barriers to diversity in vocational education including: the negative effects of racism, mythical notions about ethnically diverse groups, people having little or no exposure to members of ethnically diverse groups, and the need for diversity not being understood or respected. Das Gupta (1993) dealt primarily and specifically with discriminatory practices in curriculum and instruction.

MacDonald (1992) outlined such barriers at universities and colleges as "biased professors, lack of outreach services, lack of support and retention programs, eurocentric curriculum, hostile campus climate, denial of racism by the institution" (p. 6). Hynes (1987) described five different types of barriers: institutional, language and cultural barriers, lack of knowledge of programs, situational barriers, and the lack of training options. Institutional barriers relating to retention were: "lack of flexible scheduling of courses"; "staffing levels"; "absence of bilingual, bi-cultural staff"; "lack of cross-cultural sensitivity on part of college personnel"; "general discrimination"; and, "tendency of programs not to take culture into account in design and

implementation" (p. 98).

MacDonald (1992) also provided a composite picture of responses from colleges and universities to support racial/ethnic relations policy. Responses relating to retention include: reduction and eventual elimination of racial prejudice and discrimination and protection of human rights; anti-racist training for all faculty and staff; inclusionary curriculum; outreach to minority communities; formal and informal complaints procedures; retention and support services; and affirmative action/employment equity programs (p. 10). MacDonald (1992) then described a number of specific retention/transition strategies used by various colleges/universities: tutors, special student advisors who monitor students' progress, student success programs for all students (e.g. exploration programs, buddy programs, peer counselling, etc), and increased student services to all students (p. 12).

Approaches to promoting diversity and increasing retention suggested by Bowen and Jackson (1992) were:

- Expect, respect, and appreciate diversity.
- Have high standards and expectations for ethnically diverse students.
- Understand, value, and share non-European experiences.
- Use culturally appropriate language and teaching techniques.
- Avoid asking any student to speak for a whole race of people.
- Use positive role models from ethically diverse communities.
- Be honest, fair, and consistent in dealing with ethnically diverse students.
- Seek "an" answer and not always "the" European answer.
- Use a variety of methods and techniques for ethnically diverse students.
- Use ethnically diverse leaders as resources for teaching and student recruitment.
- Develop strong relationships with ethnically diverse communities. (p. 19)

Das Gupta (1993) in dealing with curriculum and instruction provided the following list of anti-racist or bias-free precepts for practice:

1. Develop a critical perspective among students.
2. Identify discriminatory practices and replace them with bias free practices.
3. Develop the skills of giving and receiving constructive feedback.
4. Make all curricula inclusive of the experiences of marginalized groups.
5. Develop student skills in identifying bias in curricula.
6. Include within curricula both the formal learning materials as well as the interactions in the larger learning environment.
7. Create new curricula in collaboration with other educators.

8. Include marginalized voices in the curricula.
9. Utilize experiential activities in teaching.
10. Combine theory and practice.
11. Use a variety of activities in teaching.
12. Nurture a non-threatening environment in the classroom in which open communication can take place.
13. Let "differences" be articulated and heard in the classroom, rather than be silenced.
14. Confront people without silencing them. (p. 46-47)

6.2 Results from Stakeholders

Community groups. In the focus group discussion and supportive literature provided by the groups, the following barriers or difficulties were identified:

- racial stereotyping and discrimination (overt and subtle);
- exclusion in the curriculum of any mention of the achievements and contributions of "racialized" peoples to civilization, science and technology and the arts either here or abroad;
- difficulty with English language proficiency;
- lack of sensitivity to cultural differences;
- absence of "Racialized" Canadians in educational institutions to serve as role models and contribute to policy formulation.

Students. In general, the experience of most of the students has been difficult but still positive. A majority of students (7 of 9 who responded) enrolled in programs found the learning climate welcoming, inclusive, and participatory. Most students (10 of 12 who responded) found instructors open and approachable and also available for individual assistance to students.

However, some of the barriers or difficulties described by students include:

- language difficulties, technical and conversational language;
- course content/organization: heavy course content, difficult level of language in texts, confusing information in learning guides;
- tests/evaluation methods: sometimes need more time due to language difficulties, wording on tests confusing, tests not measuring what was learned in class, and inflexible timelines for assignments;
- attitudes of teachers and/or fellow students: generally favourable although some reported racial discrimination, both direct and subtle;
- program length: too much course work or too many courses in a short time period.

Suggestions for improvement. Community group representatives had a number of suggestions:

- awareness training for all staff and students;

- elimination of stereotyping and bias in curriculum;
- bridging programs between ABE and technical training (e.g. programs that combine language training and some technical training);
- technical English language training;
- intervention mechanism to deal with harassment;
- tutorial service.

Students suggestions to overcome difficulties in a program:

- more communication skills in program;
- create small groups to work on communications;
- provide language assistance once in program (make some time available for it) which includes technical English and "street English";
- promote social interaction with others;
- part-time attendance in programs combined with language training;
- tutoring in technical subjects;
- books/lectures on tape;
- access to more computers and computer training for new immigrants;
- translators ("but very expensive");
- special English class to prepare you for post-secondary work;
- instructors need to be aware of language difficulties and make sure that students clearly understand what the instructor is saying;
- test accommodation such as more time, use dictionary, alternative ways to be evaluated;
- study skill workshops;
- "students need to mix more. . . we can learn from each other and enjoy different ethnic groups";
- "judge people on their ability to work and not on their colour, ethnic group, or language".

Other student comments about improving SIAST in general:

- "very happy with SIAST";
- support group or club;
- multicultural activities;
- peer support and/or tutoring;
- "promote tolerance";
- more multicultural staff members;
- put all programs (at Wascana) at one large site to get better mixing of students;
- more support for equity initiatives;
- better housing at Palliser (dorms perhaps);
- "treat the ethnic groups the same as you would treat the other Canadians. Give the same opportunities and be fair. . ."

6.3 Other Colleges/Institutes

The Red River Community College (1993) task force identified a wide variety of strategies in their literature search. Strategies related to retention were:

- increasing academic readiness and establishing remedial programs
- collaborating with elementary and high schools to orient and prepare students for extended formal education from an early age
- providing well coordinated, easily-accessed student services
- improving academic advising and early warning systems
- increasing the number of minority staff who serve as role models
- improving the social climate for disabled, ethnocultural, and Aboriginal students
- providing orientation and special admission and adjustment programs
- developing more culturally sensitive curriculum materials/programs
- providing multicultural training for students and staff. (p. 8)

To increase success in programs, the task force also made a number of recommendations:

- offer preparation programs not only ABE and ESL, but also English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and English for Science and Technology (EST);
- college-wide communications program;
- develop special college success seminars for new immigrants to prepare people for course work;
- develop programming options for students which can include part-time technical training combined with language training;
- increase the flexibility of program delivery to assist part-time learning (e.g. year round operation, extended hours).

Algonquin College offers support to visible racial minority students through a multicultural "buddy" system in which students are paired up in a supportive relationship (similar system used at Palliser), and with cultural adaptations such as a prayer room for Muslim students and a planned Intercultural Centre.

Holland College provides one hour per day in program specific language tutoring in the first term of the program for people with English as a second language.

Cabot College has a retention officer on staff who encourages students to remain in programs.

The University College of the Caribou uses several retention strategies for all students (orientation, pre-admission interviews, referral to counsellors, and notice of academic probation for under-performing students).

George Brown College policy related to curriculum states that "the College will use and develop curricular and co-curricular resources that are sensitive and responsive to the ethnocultural, racial, linguistic and religious diversity of the community". Procedures implemented to support the policy include:

- review all curriculum to identify materials that contain offensive material or lack the perspective of minority communities;
- develop strategies to overcome any bias in curriculum or delivery;
- include a criteria of bias-free in the purchase of curriculum material;
- programs such as English for Special Purposes, English Skills Development, bridging or literacy programs;
- include anti-racism curriculum within programs;
- formal dispute resolution process; and,
- celebrate International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21).

Mount Royal College has a policy for students with special needs. In the policy, the college calls for "reasonable services, within its financial constraints", such as the following:

- orientation to the College
- referrals to additional services or agencies
- program planning assistance
- registration assistance
- assistance in arranging for interpreters
- counselling (e.g. career, personal, educational)
- academic assistance (e.g. taping of lectures and readings, loans of specialized equipment, note-taking, exam-writing, library research, and tutoring).

6.4 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with retention include:

1. **Preparation**: (a) develop and deliver a short preparatory course for equity students that provides orientation to programs and services as well as study skill development;
   (b) investigate the feasibility of a preparation program that combines language training with technical training.

2. **Language**: develop and deliver a course in technical language development to run in tandem with technical training.

3. **Curriculum**: promote inclusive, bias-free curriculum by reviewing curriculum materials for all programs to eliminate any bias, and to include minority perspectives where relevant.

4. **Instruction**: (a) promote flexibility in program organization and delivery; (b) develop guidelines for test accommodations that provide alternative ways to assess learning without diminishing academic standards or external accreditation standards;
(c) promote instructional development that focuses on skills and attitudes required to work with diverse student populations.

5. **Academic support**: develop a number of strategies to support academic success such as: peer involvement through buddy systems or peer counselling, tutoring system, and the development of alternative resources (e.g. books/lectures on tape).

6. **Cultural/Social**: (a) encourage the formation of social groups or clubs for minority students; and,
(b) celebrate and promote diversity awareness as part of the life and culture of SIAST.

7.0 Graduate Follow-up

What assistance or follow up is currently provided to graduates who are in the visible minority category as they begin to enter the workforce?

What assistance/support or follow up is needed to support the expanded education equity policy and program?

7.1 Results from Stakeholders

Follow up currently provided. Visible minority students can access the existing placement services available within SIAST, like all other students. There are placement offices at Kelsey, Palliser and Wascana. Examples of follow up provided include:

- students can access all job postings that come in to institutes, and can access names of employers with employment equity programs;
- placement offices maintain direct links with Saskatchewan Employment Equity Practitioners Association;
- direct referrals to companies with employment equity programs;
- job seeking skills workshops (voluntary and as part of program's curriculum);
- follow up counselling to assist with job search;
- encouraging people to self-identify on applications;
- information available on equity programs, job search, resumes, interviews.

At Woodland, there is no specific placement office so placement is done informally through programs and counsellors. Most of the whole student population receives some training (by program) in resume writing, job search and mock interviews. About half of the programs have practicum placements which provide work experience. Special follow up is now provided for all students who are funded by Canada Employment Centre (about 140 students annually), some of whom are from visible minority groups.

Follow up needed. Suggestions for improving follow up and job placement:

- begin tracking graduates to monitor their success in the work world, and report this back to programs as well as use this information in recruiting new students (community participants);
- set up more formal links with those employers who have employment equity programs (community participants);
- have interview rooms set aside and available;
- bring in guest speakers (e.g. from target group);
- specific workshop based on specific difficulties that target groups might face in job search;
- increase staffing for placement offices (most have only one or two people).

7.2 Other Colleges/Institutes

Red River Community College task force (1993) recommended "the College must work with employers to establish a network that will help Aboriginal graduates, ethnocultural graduates, and graduates with disabilities obtain employment" (p. 40). None of the other colleges who responded had any specific follow up process for the visible minority target group.

7.3 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with graduate follow up include:

1. **Follow up system**: design a follow up system for equity students to track their success in the labour market.

2. **Graduate employment survey**: include visible minorities category (and short definition) in the demographic section, to help track students.

3. **Exit interviews**: conduct exit interviews with students who leave without completing programs to determine the nature of their difficulties.

4. **Resources**: investigate ways to expand the resources being put into follow up and placement (e.g. fund guest speakers or workshops).

8.0 Staff development

What staff development activities have occurred in the past three years that deal with education equity or race/ethnic relations?

What are the needs for staff development to support the expanded education equity policy and program?

Due to the time and budget constraints on this project, the survey of professional development activities only included those formal activities that have been documented by the human resource departments or by the professional development committees over the past three years.

8.1 Literature Review

External. Staff training has been identified as a very important and essential key in the development and implementation of policies dealing with education equity or racial/ethnocultural issues (ACCC, 1990; Das Gupta, 1993; Hynes, 1987; Locke & Parker, 1991; MacDonald, 1992).

SIAST. SIAST Education Equity Committee (1993) has compiled a resource manual, ***Teaching students with disabilities: A guidebook for faculty and staff***. This manual has received favourable response from instructors. This suggests that a similar strategy would be effective for visible minorities as well. (Resources to this end are all ready being collected as part of this project and other efforts by the Education Equity Committee.)

8.2 Results from Stakeholders

Activity to date. There was some activity reported from the human resource staff or the professional development committees dealing with visible minorities or education equity in general. There have been a few workshops conducted as illustrated by these examples:

- Kelsey had a workshop on "Integrating Women into Predominantly Male Programs", but nothing dealing directly with visible minorities.

- Palliser has had a number of cross-cultural workshops, such as "The Healing Circle" held in February, 1994.

- In 1992, Wascana devoted the PD day for all staff to the theme of "Responding to Diversity", with the keynote address "Developing Multicultural Curricula to Encourage Student Motivation" by Margery Ginsberg, and with a number of related concurrent sessions. In 1993, concurrent sessions at the PD day (theme of "Embracing Change")

included "Working with Aboriginal Students" and "Teaching the Learning Disabled". In 1994 PD day, the workshop "Communicating in a culturally diverse workplace" was offered as a concurrent session.

- In the early days of Woodland, managers had a workshop dealing with employment equity issues. No other specific workshops held for staff or management since. No requests have been made for such training to the professional development committees at Woodland.

- SIAST-wide training has included "Towards true equity - ACCC training workshop" with 16 participants from across SIAST, February/March, 1994.

Informal or program specific activities have not been included. However, informal discussions did indicate that some programs have initiated activities to promote multicultural/racial diversity and understanding. As well, there has been institute-wide multicultural awareness activities such as participating in International Development Week.

Training to date has primarily been occasional, isolated and voluntary. There is no plan in place to provide systematic training for all staff to deal with the implementation of the education equity program, and all the various issues that may arise from that initiative. As one manager said "we need to mandate the future, based on demographics, and then provide the skills to achieve that mandate."

Need for staff development. There was strong agreement from all stakeholders that staff development was essential to implementing the equity program. Some suggestions for staff development included:

- train human resource personnel in dealing with employment equity;
- train in-house facilitators who can then conduct small workshops on an on-going basis;
- human rights and the role of the human rights commission;
- cross-cultural awareness and appreciation for all faculty and staff;
- customer-focused awareness training for front-line employees (similar to that provided in hospitality industry);
- "live in my shoes for a day";
- "building curriculum to meet diversity";
- dealing with difference; and,
- implementation of the education equity policy.

8.3 Other Colleges/Institutes

In eastern Canada, a number of colleges reported staff development activities such as multicultural workshops. Algonquin College has a multicultural workplace coordinator who assists other faculty in dealing with diversity, and

provides on-going staff training through workshops. Durham College has developed a workshop "Meeting the Challenge of Diversity", designed to help employers and employees understand cultural and racial diversity. Loyalist College has offered workshops in cultural diversity training to raise awareness of faculty and staff. As well, faculty review classroom practices and curriculum for bias. Other colleges with staff development in this area were Holland College and George Brown College.

In western Canada, Red River Community College (1993) conducted a president's task force which called for training for staff in areas such as: cross-cultural training; managing diversity in the college environment; creating a caring environment; awareness of people with disabilities; aboriginal history (given by qualified aboriginal persons). It was also recommended that a cross-cultural training course be a required part of every program at the college. The University College of the Caribou in British Columbia has offered multicultural workshops in various instructional and support divisions. As well, their Coordinator for First Nations Students advocates and informs through presentations and meetings.

The National Coalition Building Institute of Canada has done a number of workshops for colleges, schools and other human service agencies dealing with welcoming diversity, conflict resolution, and coalition and ally building. Goals of the welcoming diversity workshop include: identify information and misinformation we have learned about other social groups; identify and express pride in the social identity group(s) we belong to; describe experiences of mistreatment; experience the personal impact of discrimination; demonstrate a method of dealing with prejudicial jokes or remarks in a non-judgemental way (Dungey, 1994).

8.4 Recommendations

Recommendations for staff development include:

1. **Training**: mandatory training provided for all staff on: dealing with diversity (in all forms), eliminating racism, implementing the education equity policy and procedures, and other topics as identified in this report.

2. **Develop resources**: compile a manual for faculty to guide instruction for a diverse audience, similar to the manual for teaching students with disabilities.

9.0 Organization and Structure of the Education Equity Program

Examine the organization and structure of the education equity program.

How can the organization and structure be improved?

9.1 Literature Review

In a study of how colleges and universities deal with racism, MacDonald (1992) reported that "committees and special offices are being used to implement institutional strategies to combat racism and to promote anti-racism learning environments" (p. 13). As well, in terms of structure, one strategy used to support policy on race/ethnic relations was the "establishment of a committee (or ombudsperson, or other office) to hear formal complaints and to review proactive policy." (p. 11)

In a study of how colleges/institutes are dealing with multiculturalism and multiracialism, ACCC (1990) stated that the majority of Canadian colleges are not geared for meeting the challenges presented by a growing diverse community:

> Colleges, particularly in our urban centres, need to form partnerships with their multicultural and Native populations in order to provide a comprehensive and holistic range of programs and services. . . If colleges do not start to work now towards that goal, their overall relevancy to their communities may be seriously questioned by the year 2000. The time to move is now. (p. 29)

9.2 Results from Stakeholders

Roles/Responsibilities. In general, comments about the structure of the equity program were favourable, given the nature of SIAST as a multi-institute organization with some variance from institute to institute. There were comments about a growing work load, and about beginning to distribute some "equity" responsibilities to other counsellors. Another concern was raised by some coordinators identified the confusion around roles and responsibilities of the SIAST-wide committee and the local institutes, especially around the allocation and control of enhancement funds. The challenge within SIAST continues to be to balance some overall consistent provincial guidelines and "common direction" with local adaptation and autonomy.

Employment equity came up in the discussions here and elsewhere. It was felt that SIAST really needs to put the employment equity program into place "to model equity throughout the organization".

Representation. In the discussion with the external community groups, it was noted that there is no representation from the external community for this target group. The request for direct representation was strongly voiced. For example, equity is one of the key principles of the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. As a result, equity groups have direct representation on the national board and the provincial boards. SIAST could adopt that practice in the representation of the education equity committee, as well as on our Board of Directors and our program advisory committees.

Also, there is no representation of the SIAST Secretariat on the equity committee, so information is not flowing back and forth from that part of SIAST.

Disputes. Community representatives suggested that SIAST set up an impartial and fair means to intervene and settle disputes (e.g. harassment) that may arise between students and faculty or staff. One student mentioned having difficulty with an instructor who was harassing the student. The student did not know who to talk to about the problem, and struggled for many months before going to a counsellor. The counsellor was able to mediate a distancing solution and the student progressed in the program. It was unclear to the student how to proceed with the difficulty as the other instructors, program head and dean were seen as being partial to the instructor in question.

9.3 Other Colleges/Institutes

The response to our survey confirms the conclusion of the ACCC (1990) report. Only six colleges/institutes (of the 49 surveyed) reported having any formal policy and/or structure for dealing with education equity or racial/ethnic relations, including: Alberta Vocational College (Calgary), Centennial College, Durham College, George Brown College, Red River Community College, and Seneca College. Several other colleges did report that a policy was currently under development.

Red River Community College (1993) president's task force report called for a dean of aboriginal education and institutional diversity with the responsibility to monitor and report on the implementation of the many task force recommendations.

Alberta Vocational College - Calgary has code of behaviour for staff and students, and a racial harassment policy. There is a formal procedure to report and resolve harassment issues.

Centennial College has a permanent education/employment equity advisory committee with membership from all the various college communities. This committee works directly with the President. Staff responsibility for education/employment equity is at the manager level in the Human Resources

department. As well, there is a specific resolution process for dealing with wrongful discrimination actions.

George Brown College has a comprehensive race and ethnic relations policy which provides a multi-dimensional support to the development of race and ethnic relations. In terms of structure, the policy calls for equitable representation on its Board of Governors and advisory committees. As well, the policy contains a specific means for handling incidents of expressed bias and discrimination.

9.4 Recommendations

Recommended actions to deal with the organization and structure of the education equity program include:

1. **Policy development**: (a) revise the policy with any changes arising from this report; and,
(b) clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various participants involved in the implementation of the policy; and,
(c) determine a specific percentage of the enhancement fund to be dedicated to SIAST-wide projects and to each institute for local projects.

2. **Human Resources**: (a) increase the half-time responsibility of the Chair of the SIAST Education Equity Committee to a full-time responsibility, funded from the enhancement fund;
(b) monitor the responsibilities and work loads of counsellors or coordinators in order to plan and organize the equity program more effectively;
(c) promote the immediate implementation of an employment equity program; and,
(d) promote the recognition of accomplishments of staff members who come from various equity groups.

3. **Representation**: (a) provide direct representation on the education equity committee for the external community (e.g. the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians);
(b) establish other direct links with external community which could include an institute advisory committee with representation from all equity groups as well as direct representation of all equity groups on the SIAST Board of Directors and program advisory committees; and,
(c) provide representation from the SIAST Secretariat on the committee.

4. **Network**: establish and maintain a network with the other colleges/institutes working in the area of education equity and/or race and ethnic policy development, and with external agencies (e.g.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada) with policies or programs that impact upon SIAST programs.

5. **Handling disputes**: evaluate the effectiveness of existing internal dispute mechanisms (e.g. student appeal policy) and investigate other impartial means to handle disputes that may arise in any aspect of SIAST operation concerning racial/ethnic relations.

6. **Evaluation**: establish an on-going, systematic, formal means to monitor and evaluate the implementation of all aspects of the education equity policy and program.

10.0 Other Outcomes of the Project

As a result of conducting this research project, the following additional outcomes occurred:

1. Resources. Compiled extensive resources and bibliography/resource list for further study and for the development of program curriculum and/or staff development training workshops.

2. Networking/public relations. Establishment of contact with other institutes/colleges in Canada who are working on creating effective education equity programs. These contacts also promoted the efforts that SIAST is making in the area of education equity. A questionnaire was sent to 49 colleges/institutes in Canada. A complete list of colleges/institutes contacted as part of the project is included in the appendices.

   Direct contact was also made with other external stakeholders (e.g. community groups such as the Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Multicultural Council and the Saskatchewan Forum for Racialized Canadians). Such contact needs to be continued.

3. Promotion of the education equity program. Promotion of the program resulted from direct contact and dialogue with internal stakeholders in all the institutes in the following areas: human resources, professional development committees, placement offices, high school liaison, registrars.

4. Employment equity. Materials from across Canada were received that dealt with employment equity. These materials will be shared with the new SIAST employment equity manager.

11.0 Summary of Recommendations

Many of these recommendations would benefit not only visible minority students, but also other equity students and the total student population.

1.0 Definition of visible minorities:

1.1 **Name**: determine an appropriate name and definition for this designated group/population, from consultation with representatives of the racial groups involved (especially the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians).

1.2 **Documentation**: (a) revise all related SIAST policies, documents, and promotional literature to include the name and definitions of this designated group; and,
(b) provide the name and definition of the name right on the admissions form, with no reference to other documents.

2.0 Recruitment:

2.1 **Recruit**: actively recruit equity students using the suggestions gathered from both staff and from students.

2.2 **Materials**: examine and revise SIAST public relations materials (especially the calendar) in order to reflect a diversity (in all its forms) in our population base.

2.3 **Linkages**: (a) create stronger links with the external minority communities and involve people from those communities directly in recruiting efforts; and,
(b) create stronger links with funding agencies that deal with new immigrants, to increase the communication and coordination of activities.

3.0 Admissions:

3.1 **English language requirement**: (a) evaluate the existing pre-admission language training at SIAST to determine its effectiveness in preparing students for further training; and,
(b) evaluate the current satisfactory evidence of English proficiency to determine relevance and fairness.

3.2 **Credentials**: develop a SIAST-wide model for evaluating foreign credentials, in consultation with external community groups and other colleges and universities.

3.3 **Entrance tests**: (a) evaluate all entrance tests (including TOEFL and GED) to determine utility and relevance and to ensure that such tests are free from bias; and,
(b) investigate the feasibility of developing program-related entrance tests.

3.4 **Prior Learning Assessment**: develop a formal prior learning assessment process that can be used in determining qualifications for admission, as well as for granting credit within a program.

4.0 Retention:

4.1 **Preparation**: (a) develop and deliver a short preparatory course for equity students that provides orientation to programs and services as well as study skill development;
(b) investigate the feasibility of a preparation program that combines language training with technical training.

4.2 **Language**: develop and deliver a course in technical language development to run in tandem with technical training.

4.3 **Curriculum**: promote inclusive, bias-free curriculum by reviewing curriculum materials for all programs to eliminate any bias, and to include minority perspectives where relevant.

4.4 **Instruction**: (a) promote flexibility in program organization and delivery; (b) develop guidelines for test accommodations that provide alternative ways to assess learning without diminishing academic standards or external accreditation standards;
(c) promote instructional development that focuses on skills and attitudes required to work with diverse student populations.

4.5 **Academic support**: develop a number of strategies to support academic success such as: peer involvement through buddy systems or peer counselling, tutoring system, and the development of alternative resources (e.g. books/lectures on tape).

4.6 **Cultural/Social**: (a) encourage the formation of social groups or clubs for minority students; and,
(b) celebrate and promote diversity awareness as part of the life and culture of SIAST.

5.0 Graduate follow up:

5.1 **Follow up system**: design a follow up system for equity students to track their success in the labour market.

5.2 **Graduate employment survey**: include visible minorities category (and short definition) in the demographic section, to help track students.

5.3 **Exit interviews**: conduct exit interviews with students who leave without completing the programs to determine the nature of their difficulties.

5.4 **Resources**: investigate ways to expand the resources currently being put into follow up and placement (e.g. fund guest speakers or specific job search workshops).

6.0 Staff development:

6.1 **Training**: develop and deliver mandatory training provided for all staff on such topics as dealing with diversity (in all forms), eliminating racism, implementing the education equity policy and procedures, and other topics as identified in this report.

6.2 **Develop resources**: compile a manual for faculty to guide instruction for a diverse audience, similar to the manual for teaching students with disabilities.

7.0 Organization/structure of the education equity program:

7.1 **Policy development**: (a) revise the policy with any changes arising from this report; and,
(b) clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various participants involved in the implementation of the policy; and,
(c) determine a specific percentage of the enhancement fund to be dedicated to SIAST-wide projects and to each institute for local projects.

7.2 **Human Resources**: (a) increase the half-time responsibility of the Chair of the SIAST Education Equity Committee to a full-time responsibility, funded from the enhancement fund;
(b) monitor the responsibilities and work loads of counsellors or coordinators in order to plan and organize the equity program more effectively;
(c) promote the immediate implementation of an employment equity program; and,

(d) promote the recognition of accomplishments of staff members who come from various equity groups.

7.3 **Representation:** (a) provide direct representation on the education equity committee for the external community (e.g. the Saskatchewan Forum for "Racialized" Canadians);
(b) establish other direct links with external community which could include an institute advisory committee with representation from all equity groups as well as direct representation of all equity groups on the SIAST Board of Directors and program advisory committees; and,
(c) provide representation from the SIAST Secretariat on the committee.

7.4 **Network:** establish and maintain a network with the other colleges/institutes working in the area of education equity and/or race and ethnic policy development, and with external agencies (e.g. Citizenship and Immigration Canada) with policies or programs that impact upon SIAST programs.

7.5 **Handling disputes:** evaluate the effectiveness of existing internal dispute mechanisms (e.g. student appeal policy) and investigate other impartial means to handle disputes that may arise in any aspect of SIAST operation concerning racial/ethnic relations.

7.6 **Evaluation:** establish an on-going, systematic, formal means to monitor and evaluate the implementation of all aspects of the education equity policy and program.

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13.0 Appendices

1. Student Questionnaire
2. Colleges/Institutes Surveyed in Project

EDUCATION EQUITY PROJECT: STUDENT QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions as fully as you can. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

Recruitment:

How did you find out about your program?

Where did you get information? Was it easy to get?

How could we make information about SIAST easier to obtain?

Are there places that SIAST needs to include in recruiting efforts?

Admission process:

Entrance requirements - describe how you were able to get into the program? Was there recognition of previous educational qualifications from home country?

How can we improve our entrance requirements?

Describe your experience with entrance tests?

How can we improve entrance tests?

Language: What ways can SIAST help to overcome any difficulties that language may cause in a program?

Would it be helpful to get tested in your English capability before going into the program?

Retention in program:

Describe your experience with the following:

Course content and/or organization?

Tests/evaluation methods?

Attitudes of teachers and/or fellow students?

Program length?

Are instructors are available for individual assistance to students?

Are instructors open and approachable?

Is the learning climate welcoming, inclusive, participatory?

Definition:

What does "visible minority" mean to you?

Do you feel you are part of this group called "visible minority"?

What would you call yourself?

Other:

Do you have any other suggestions about how to make SIAST a better place for people of all ethnic groups?

Colleges/Institutes Surveyed

British Columbia

British Columbia Institute of Technology - R*
Camosun College
Capilano College
Douglas College
Kwantlen College
North Island College
The University College of the Cariboo - R
University College of the Fraser Valley
Vancouver Community College

Alberta

Alberta Vocational College, Calgary - R
Alberta Vocational College, Edmonton
Grant MacEwan Community College - R
Medicine Hat College
Mount Royal College - R
Olds College
Red Deer College

Manitoba

Keewatin Community College
Red River Community College - R

Ontario

Algonquin College - R
Cambrian College
Centennial College - R
Conestoga College
Durham College - R
George Brown College - R
Georgian College
La Cité Collégiale
Loyalist College - R
Mohawk College
St. Clair College
St. Lawrence College
Sir Sandford Fleming College

Seneca College - R (phone only)
The Michener Institute for Applied Health Sciences

Quebec

Cégep André-Laurendeau
Cégep de Saint-Laurent, St-Laurent
Cégep de Saint-Laurent, Ville St-Laurent
Collège Bois-de-Boulogne
Collège de Maisonneuve
Collège de l'Outaouais
Collège Édouard-Montpetit
Collège Marie-Victorin

New Brunswick

New Brunswick Community College

Newfoundland/Labrador

Cabot College of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education - R
Labrador College

Prince Edward Island

Holland College - R

Nova Scotia

Nautical Institute
Nova Scotia College of Art and Design
Nova Scotia Community College - R
University College of Cape Breton

* R = Responses (n = 15).